

WordPress SEO Secrets Revealed



By Matt Bush

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WHAT IS SEO?

SEO stands for “Search Engine Optimization”, and it is essentially the process of preparing and promoting your website for the search engines. Whenever someone wants to find something on the internet, they use a search engine. The search engines have an incredible task, they need to find relevant results for searches that people perform.

Optimizing your site means that you are spending time getting it ready to it will hopefully rank in the search engines. This will bring traffic to your website.

To hear me talk a bit more on what SEO is and how we will be applying it to WordPress, please view video #1.

WHY YOU SHOULD OPTIMIZE YOUR WORDPRESS BLOG

Search engine optimization (SEO) is very important if you ever want to gain decent rankings in the search engine. Even though the word “SEO” can sound terribly intimidating, actually applying it to your blog is no where near as hard as it sounds. All you have to do is invest some initial time into learning the basics, and soon your blog will be better than 90% of the others out there, simply because you have SEO.

Here are just a few of the many reasons why SEO for WordPress is so important:

Why You Should Optimize

- **SEO is actually pretty easy to do**
- **Most people don't bother to do it!**
- **Keyword research can play a big part in increasing your natural search engine rankings**
- **Bottom Line: The results far outweigh the time required to do SEO**

To learn more about the reasons you should be optimizing, please view video #2.

THE BASICS OF ON-PAGE OPTIMIZATION

Before we go any further, I would like to review with you the basic principles of on-page optimization. As we move forward in the videos, I will be applying each of these (along with many more advanced concepts) to a blog.

Basic SEO Principles

- **Keyword Research**
- **Actual Page Name**
- **Title Tags**
- **Meta Tags**
- **Header Tags**
- **Bold, Italics, & Underlining**
- **Keyword Usage**
- **Proper Link Structure**

To learn more about the basic overview of on-page optimization, be sure to check out Video #3.

WORDPRESS PLUGINS YOU WILL NEED

Before we start breaking things down one step at a time, you will need to download and install a few plugins. Please take the time now to download all of these plugins (if you don't want to use some of them, that's okay):

All in One SEO

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/all-in-one-seo-pack/>

Google XML Sitemaps

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/google-sitemap-generator/>

No Duplicate

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/seo-no-duplicate/>

SEO Friendly Images

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<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/seo-image/>

Redirection

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/redirection/>

Subscribing to Comments

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/subscribe-to-comments/>

Google Analytics

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/google-analytics-for-wordpress>

Popularity Contest

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/popularity-contest/>

Related Posts

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wordpress-23-related-posts-plugin/>

WP Polls

<http://www.lesterchan.net/wordpress/readme/wp-polls.html>

You can learn more about what these plugins will do in video #4

INSTALLING AND ACTIVATING YOUR PLUGINS

Now that you have the plugins downloaded, you will need to install them to your WordPress blog. This is a pretty easy process, but you will need a ftp program to access your files. If you don't already have one, I suggest using Filezilla, as it is free and a good program as well:

<http://filezilla-project.org>

Please follow me in video #5 to watch me upload and activate the plugins we will be working with.

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OPTIMIZING YOUR PERMALINK STRUCTURE

This is one of the most important things you should do to properly SEO your blog. Even though WordPress is a great piece of software, it is not initially optimized for SEO. Let's say for example, that you create a post entitled "Potty Dog Training Tips". By default it would look something like this:

Myblog.com/?p=3

That isn't very descriptive at all, is it! By making a simple change to something called the permalink structure, we can make it look like this automatically:

Myblog.com/potty-dog-training-tips

A lot better eh?

Changing the permalink structure is pretty easy, you just need to go to the settings section of your blog, and click on "Permalinks". Make sure that you enter this as your custom link:

`/category%/postname%/`

Once this information is saved, your blog will generate some code that you need to stick into your .htaccess file. You can do this through ftp or a program like file manager through your cpanel. Please refer to Video #6 to see me change my permalink structure.

THE POWER OF KEYWORD RESEARCH

If you aren't doing proper keyword research before you plan and write your blog post, you are taking a stab in the dark at your post becoming popular. Just writing on your niche isn't enough, you need to be spending time researching and discovering the best keywords to target.

The basic premise of keyword research involves finding keywords that have:

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1. A reasonable amount of searches per day/month
2. A reasonably low amount of competition on the internet for that specific phrase.
3. Are related to your market, and would generate traffic that would perform well for you.

Whenever someone does a search on Google, Google keeps track of the results. We can access this incredibly valuable data by heading here:

<https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>

We will use this tool as a way to gauge what types of things people in your market are searching for.

Please refer to video #7 to learn more about the fundamentals of keyword research.

KEYWORD RESEARCH CASE STUDY

I created a detailed keyword search case study, so you can follow along with my exact thought process as I find keywords to target on my blog. I also talk about how to gauge the competition for a particular phrase by doing a search on Google for that keyword phrase, and enclose it in quotes. So, for example, it would look like this:

“custom embroidered hats”

I highly recommend you view video #8 to see this case study.

OVERVIEW OF AN OPTIMIZED POST

Before we go any further, I would like to outline the basics of what go into creating an optimized post or page. We will break each of these topics down as we move forward.

Optimized Post

- **Title**
- **Importance of header tags**
- **Italics, bold, underlining**
- **Good content**
- **Keyword tags**
- **Optimized Images**

You can hear me talk about this in more detail in video #9.

CONFIGURING THE ALL IN ONE SEO PACK

Earlier I asked you to install several plugins. Now it is time to configure and enable the “All in One SEO Pack” plugin.

Once you are logged into your administrative panel, you can access the configuration.

You can see me walk through this in Video #10.

CHOOSING A TITLE FOR YOUR POST

Creating an optimized post really isn’t that hard. The first thing you need to do is decide on a title. You will want it to focus on the keyword phrase that you have decided to focus on. You will also want to make sure that the title follows a few basic guidelines.

A Good Title Is:

- **Descriptive**
- **Researched**
- **Enticing**
- **Not “Stuffed”**

To hear me talk more about finding a good title, please review Video #11 for further details.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HEADER TAGS

Now it is time to start writing the actual post. I would first like to call your attention to the usage of header tags. Header tags essentially tell the search engines what the most important part of the page is. You will want to take great care to make sure you are using header tags appropriately. To create a header tag, just enclose whatever phrase you choose with the following tags (make sure you are creating a post with HTML:

```
<h1>Potty Dog Training </h1>
```

You can also use varying levels of header tags throughout your post, changing the number from 1-5. You will only want to use “1” once, but can use the others to varying degrees. I wouldn’t suggest getting carried away though!

Please review video #12 to see me create header tags.

WORKING WITH ITALICS, BOLD, AND UNDERLINING

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Next I would like to talk about how we can choose individual or groups of words within our post and single them out, telling the search engines that these are the most important words in the paragraph. This can be done by using italics, bold, and underlining.

This can be done simply by highlighting your chosen words while in visual editing mode and hitting the appropriate button. You can also create the tags yourself in HTML mode.

`` = Bold

`<i></i>` = Italics

`<u></u>` = Underline

You can also combine more than one of these to really emphasize a phrase.

Please refer to Video #13 to see me apply these techniques to a post.

THE POWER OF GOOD CONTENT

I wanted to take a moment to talk about the quality of content that you should be writing when you create a post. You need to remember that it isn't enough to use your keywords repeatedly in a post (in fact you want to make sure you don't overuse your target keyword, try to keep it between 2.5% and 5%). You need to be writing good content.

The best case scenario is that someone will find your blog, love it, and then tell their friends. Your goal here is to gain a positive reputation on the internet, and if your content stinks, all of the optimization in the world isn't going to help you.

So take the time to write good quality content that people will want to read.

To hear me talk a bit more about this, please refer to video #14.

CREATING TITLE AND KEYWORD TAGS FOR YOUR POST

The All in One SEO Plugin creates a spot on each post where you can enter meta tag data. This is very beneficial in terms of seo, and something you will really want to do for each post that you create (you can also go back and add this to past posts as well).

I typically paste the title in that was being used in my post, and then enter the keywords to be variations of my targeted phrases.

You can see me apply this to a post in video #15.

USING THE SEO FRIENDLY IMAGES PLUGIN TO OPTIMIZE IMAGES

We want to take every opportunity that we can to tell the search engines what our website is about, and another way to do that is through images. Everytime you display an image on your website, you should make use of the alt and title tags associated with images.

Whenever you add an image, WordPress asks you if you would like to enter tags for them automatically. However, if you haven't been adding these tags all along, going back and filling them in can be quite a pain!

Fortunately the SEO Friendly Images plugin can help out with that. Once it is configured, it will go back and automatically add these tags to your past images (based on parameters you set). Pretty cool eh?

You can see me setup this plugin in video #16.

DEALING WITH URL CANONIZATION

Url canonization is a bit of a confusing topic, but I wanted to mention it as it use to be a big problem in the past with WordPress.

As long as you are using WordPress 2.3 or higher, canonization will not be a problem for you. All you need to do is upgrade. I highly suggest you do that!

Please review Video #17 to see me expand upon this.

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CONNECTING POSTS WITH THE RELATED POSTS PLUGIN

As you write posts, it is a good idea to point out to your readers other posts that are similar. After all, if someone is reading a post on “dog training”, chances are they would be interested in hearing about other posts that were related. This can be a pain to do, especially as your blog grows in size.

Fortunately there is a plugin that can do this for you automatically, it is called the related posts plugin and can be found here:

<http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wordpress-23-related-posts-plugin/>

Once this plugin is installed, you can configure it to specify however many related posts you like. You also have some say on what is considered “related”. After you have made the proper configurations, the plugin gives you a line of code that you simply place into your template.

To see me work with the related posts plugin, please view Video #18

THE IMPORTANCE OF LIMITING LINKS WITH NOFOLLOW

From time to time, you may be linking to other sites that are unrelated to yours. Remember, every time you link to someone, you lose a bit of your “link juice”. Whenever a situation arises when you want to give your visitors a link, but not necessarily for SEO purposes, it pays to have the link be “NoFollow”. Here is an example of a link with the nofollow attribute:

```
<a rel = “nofollow” href=”http://mylink.com>link</a>
```

To learn more about how and when to use a NoFollow link, please review Video #19.

THE GOOGLE XML SITEMAPS PLUGIN

An important part of having an effective navigation is having a sitemap. Unfortunately your blog will be constantly changing, and updating a sitemap sure would be a pain. Fortunately there are plugins that can create the sitemaps for

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you, and automatically modify them for you every time there is a change. I suggest using the google sitemap plugin.

Once the plugin is installed, just head to “Settings” and then click on the “XML – Sitemap” option. Here you will see a few options for the sitemap. Once you are satisfied with this (the default settings are fine) click to build it.

If you experience an error with the build (I did when I tried to create it), you will need to create two files and upload them to the root of your blog directory. The files you need to create are “sitemap.xml” and “sitemap.xml.gz”. Make sure they are writable. Once you have done this, you should be able to create the sitemap.

You can see me go through this process in video #20.

CUSTOMIZING REDIRECTS WITH THE REDIRECTION PLUGIN

Sometimes I move posts around on my blog, change categories, and so forth. This can cause a problem when this also changes the post’s URL location! This could mean that if someone was linking to a post, and I moved it, they would end up getting an error.

The redirection plugin takes care of this for you, and whenever you move a post, it creates a redirect for you. The plugin actually does a lot more, including setting up “groups” of redirects, monitoring errors and responding, and so forth.

You can watch me interact with this helpful plugin in video #21.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERACTING WITH YOUR USERS

You will want to make sure that you do everything you can to encourage your visitors to interact with you. This can be done in a variety of ways. One thing that works for me is encouraging your readers to leave you comments. Once they do, make sure that you take the time to respond to them! Whenever a visitor leaves their web address, I would also suggest taking the time to visit their blog and leave a comment. Remember, a very small amount of people actually take the

time to leave you a comment. Make sure you take the time to interact with them!

To see me talk a bit more about this, please view video #22.

CREATING A POLL

One fantastic way to get your readers involved is through creating a poll. Fortunately this can be done pretty easily with the WP Poll plugin.

Once the poll plugin is installed, you will see a “Poll” tab in your main dashboard. Clicking it will bring up a bunch of options, including the ability to make new polls. Once you have created your own poll, you can add it by either pasting in the supplied code into your template, or through using the “widgets” function in the theme editor.

A poll can be a real fun way to get your readers involved, I highly recommend it!

To see me work with the WP Poll plugin, please view video #23.

RUNNING A “POPULARITY CONTEST”

There is a really cool plugin, called the popularity contest plugin, which actually keeps track of your reader’s stats. It then presents them in a way to show everyone who the top posters are. This can be a great way to engage your readers. People love competitions! Of course this plugin would only be recommended if you had a blog that had a decent amount of traffic. If you have the right crowd for this type of thing, this plugin could be quite a powerful addition to your blog.

To learn more about this plugin please view video #24.

ENCOURAGING COMMENTS

When you are writing posts, make sure you keep in mind the importance of coming out and asking people to comment. Try posting questions that encourage feedback, such as asking for an opinion on what you just posted. You can also

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have open calls to questions. Whatever you can do to encourage comments, do it!

You can hear me talk a bit more about this in video #25.

SUBSCRIBING TO COMMENTS PLUGIN

Have you ever made a comment on someone's blog and forgotten to go back and check if anyone else replied to you? This nifty little plugin gives you the option to be notified the next time someone responds to your post. This is a neat option to give your blog readers, and certainly encourages that people come back to your blog. After it is installed and configured, it will automatically give your readers this option.

To see this plugin in action, please refer to video #26.

INTEGRATING FACEBOOK WITH YOUR BLOG

Facebook is a fantastic social networking platform, and hopefully you are using it already. It is a good idea for multiple reasons to integrate it with your blog, and fortunately this can be done easily.

Once you are logged into your facebook account, you can create a badge by visiting this page:

<http://www.facebook.com/facebook-widgets/>

Once the badge is created, you just need to paste it into your blog. Your badge can display all kinds of cool things such as how many friends you have, recent posts, and so forth.

To see me talk a bit more about this, please view video #27.

INTEGRATING TWITTER WITH YOUR BLOG

Twitter is a very popular site, and it continues to grow every day. It is a fantastic platform to be utilizing to find potential visitors for your blog. Twitter also allows you to create your own "badges" which you can then display on your blog.

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Here is a great resource that walks you through creating a badge for your website:

<http://help.twitter.com/forums/10711/entries/15354>

To see me talk more about this, please view video #28.

THE POWER OF FEEDBURNER

WordPress creates a feed automatically for your blog, and this opens up some interesting possibilities for us. RSS stands for “really simple syndication”, and it is basically a feed that contains updated information that summarizes what is on your blog. This feed can then be submitted to other places.

Feedburner is a service that helps you make the most of your blog feed. It has all kinds of cool features that help with distribution, tracking the number of times it has been published, and more.

Best of all, it’s free! You can learn more about Feedburner and how to integrate it with your blog here:

<http://feedburner.com>

You can learn more about Feedburner in video #29.

TRACKING YOUR BLOG STATISTICS WITH GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Marketing is an ongoing process, and analyzing your blog statistics is really important. Google Analytics is a fantastic free service that helps you easily understand your blog statistics.

You can sign up for a free account here:

www.google.com/analytics/

Once you have an account, Google will generate a snippet of code that you will need to put on your blog. Fortunately you can use the Google Analytics plugin to do this easily.

You can watch me go through this process in video #30.

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ANALYZING YOUR STATISTICS

Now that Google Analytics is installed on your blog and gathering data, you can start reading the information. There are many things that you will want to pay attention to including how many visitors you are getting, where they are coming from, how they found your blog, how long they stayed, and so forth.

You can see me go through all of this in video #31.

PROMOTION OVERVIEW

Now that you have a foundation of optimizing your blog, it is important to discuss promotion. Good rankings not only depend on on-page optimization factors as we have discussed, but off-page as well.

We will now take a look at several popular and powerful promotion methods. To see an introduction of these methods, please view video #32.

ARTICLE MARKETING

If you have been involved with internet marketing for any length of time, chances are you've heard of article marketing. Article marketing is essentially creating and distributing articles to numerous places on the net where they will in turn be distributed to a wide range of webmasters and publishers.

Okay, that's a bit of a technical definition, I think the easiest way to explain this is by showing you an example. Let's take a look at an example:

<http://ezinearticles.com/?cat=Health-and-Fitness:Anxiety>

If you click on that link, you will be taken to EzineArticles (this is the best article directory, and we will cover it in great detail shortly). Here you will see several articles written on the topic of anxiety.

So let's say for example, that you own a website about anxiety. I am going to assume that your website already contains lots of helpful information. All you would need to do is pull from what you already have, and write an article about

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anxiety (we will discuss how to do this exactly). You then take the article and submit it to EzineArticles.

Once your article is submitted, it will now be property of EzineArticles and be published on their website. This is of huge benefit to you because EzineArticles receives A LOT of traffic.

EzineArticles is an article directory, which means that people will not only come just to read articles, but they will also come to grab content to publish on their own site. Once your article is published, people will have the right to download it and publish it on their own site, *as long as they agree not to modify your article in any way.*

So here's the catch, at the end of our article, we will be permitted to have a few links back to our blog. This means that every article you submit will result in:

- 1) Highly Targeted Traffic
- 2) Backlinks

Article marketing is a fantastic way to “feel out the waters” with your cpa offer. It doesn't cost you anything but your time. I would suggest taking an offer and writing a few articles. It also doesn't hurt to check and see if others are doing the same in your niche.

I suggest you view video #33 to hear more about article marketing.

FACEBOOK MARKETING

Facebook is a very popular social networking site. It is a place where people go to network, catch up with friends, and introduce themselves to new experiences. There are a few different ways you can use Facebook to market your cpa offers.

Building a Presence on Facebook

One popular method is to establish yourself on Facebook and build up an account filled with people that are interested in your market. This can be done by creating a fan page or a group (or both!). The key to success is to not be forward with your

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marketing, but to establish yourself as a valuable resource, and fit the marketing in when it makes sense.

Before you know it, your group will go viral and it will begin to take on a life of its own.

I strongly suggest you view video #34 to hear me talk a bit more about Facebook marketing.

TWITTER MARKETING

Recently the media has been talking about Twitter. It seems I can't watch more than a few minutes of news without hearing a reference to "Follow me on Twitter", or "I tweeted this today". So what in the world is Twitter? And what the heck is a "Tweet"?!

Twitter is actually an incredibly powerful marketing tool, and if you are not harnessing it's power, you are missing out on a huge opportunity. The things Twitter can do continue to astonish me to this day.

According to Wikipedia, Twitter is a "free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as "tweets".

Twitter is a place where you create a profile for yourself (similar to Myspace or Facebook), but the focus is on interacting with others through sending out short (they can only be 140 characters long) bursts to everyone that is "following you".

At first glance, it might sound kind of strange. Honestly, the first time I heard of Twitter I thought to myself, this sounds silly. But it works, it really does. People are crazy into this stuff!

Similar to Facebook marketing, Twitter is all about building a relevant list of people in your niche. One of the most powerful aspects of this is that you can market to these people repeatedly.

I strongly suggest you view video #35 to see me show you a bit more about Twitter marketing.

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YOUTUBE MARKETING

YouTube is one of the most visited sites in the world. Did you know it can be used to get traffic and backlinks to your blog?

It is not that difficult to make a simple video consisting of slides and music (can be done using free software like windows movie maker). For example, you could make a short presentation that lists the benefits of blog, and why your visitors should check it out now.

Please view video #36 to learn more about how to use YouTube to promote your blog.

FORUM MARKETING

The internet is quite a social place. A forum is a place where a group of people that share a similar interest go to discuss it. These are also known as message boards, or “bulletin boards”.

To market on a forum, you just need to find one that would contain people that would be a good audience for your blog. A good match for this is when you can be promoting in a market that you are actually interested in. You shouldn't have any trouble creating some posts on a niche-relevant forum.

It is important that you not be too pushy with your promotions. Many forums allow you to promote in a signature. I have found that it is always better to establish yourself as an expert, as this will lead more people to trust you, and be more likely to check out your stuff.

I suggest you view video #37 to hear me expand upon this.

BLOG MARKETING

Another popular way to get links to your blog is by going to other blogs that are related to yours and making comments. Many blog owners love it when you come to their site and leave a comment, and often don't even mind if you are

using it as a way to link back to your site. You just need to make sure you don't appear spammy!

This means taking the time to read the blog post, and leaving a comment that is worthwhile. You can see me talk about this more specifically in video #38.

REQUESTING LINKS FROM RELEVANT WEBSITES

We have now covered a variety of promotion methods, but I also wanted to discuss the option of just going out and asking relevant websites for links. I've had the most success when I make my request personalized, and make sure the person understands I have actually looked at their website.

This can be a slow process, but it is still a great way to get links. I would suggest sitting down and contacting a few places. Don't get discouraged if they don't respond immediately. If you are nice and patient, you will have some great links coming your way.

To see me talk a bit more about this, check out video #39.

CONCLUSION

Congratulations! You now know the in's and out's of optimizing your WordPress blog for the search engines. I want to point out again that even though many people know how to optimize a blog, few actually take the time to do it. This means that as long as you take action on this, you will be ahead of 90 percent of the people out there!

I hope you have enjoyed learning about SEO for WordPress. Once you have an optimized blog, the sky is the limit! Good luck and see you at the top!

Take care,

Matt Bush

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